



Claims Department

A fast visit to the hospital, but I'm back at it!

I'm working on various things, mostly *Journey Planet* stuff, but there's always drama. This year, it's the Hugo admins, AGAIN. This always seems to happen.

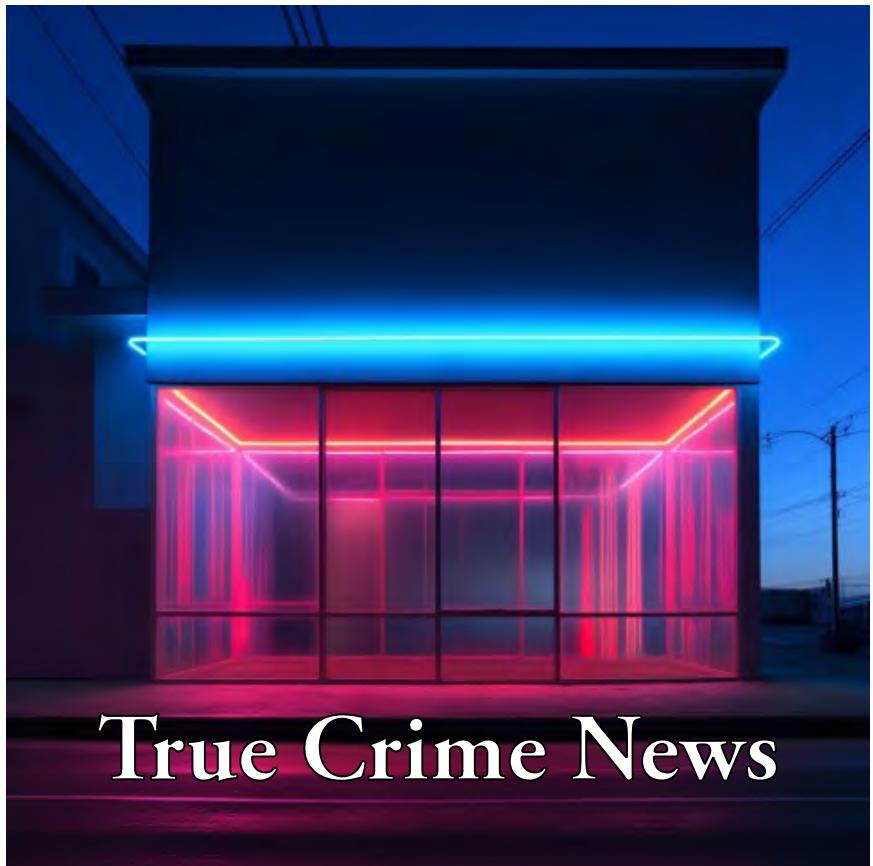
Upside, that hospital trip, which I write up later, showed I've lost a few pounds!

The kidses are monsters, but they're still cute.

Had a lovely visit to the Winchester House for the Dark-Fae Prom! I love that place, and the company was greand!

OK, up and at them!





True Crime News

The French art world was rocked.

Claude Lévéque has been charged with rape and the assault of multiple minors in France.

This is a case that is hard to believe, largely because the French Art World has been so protective of its own over the years. There are stories of Picasso and Braque being shielded, and rumors of others in more recent times. There's a sad tradition of young people being taken advantage of that seldom seem far away from famous artists.

Lévéque is largely an installation artist. In many ways, his work treads in the same world as Dan Flavin, Bruce Nauman, or Mary Wetherford. I think I first became aware of his work in 2008 or so when he did a piece that installed neon tracers on L'Pyramid of the Louvre. That piece, my fave I.M. Pei designed work, was fascinating, and rarely do Isa

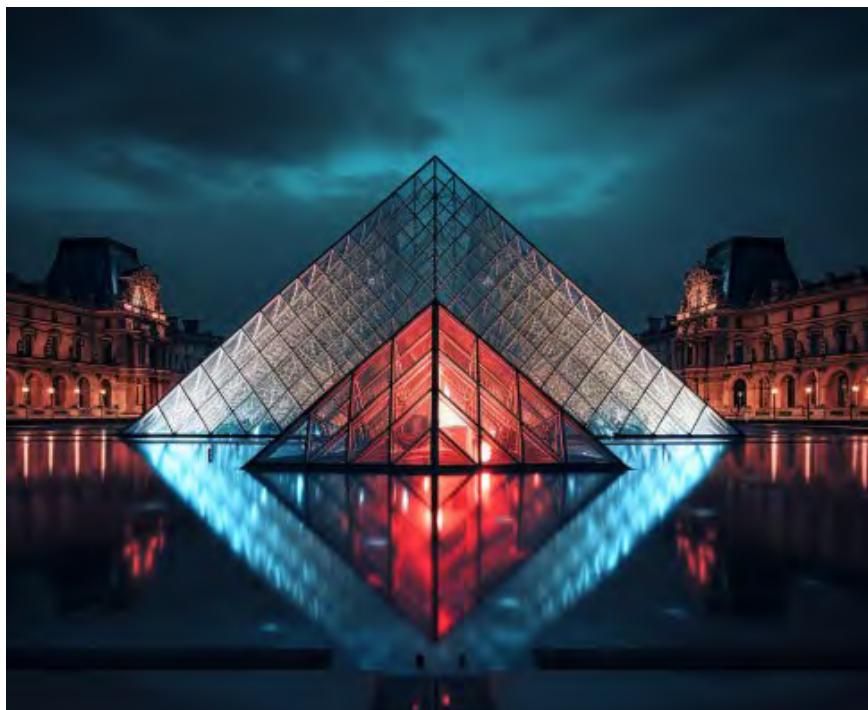
These are not the first allegations against him, nor are they surprising to many. He was accused of assaulting one of his students long-term in the 1980s, and then again by a pair of brothers who said that in the 1990s they had been abused by Lévéque over the course of several years.

We are seeing waves of these sorts of things. We had the #MeToo movement, that did nothing but good in exposing a huge number of abusers and the depth of rape culture, even as we've tried to sweep it under the rug. Wrestling had a similar moment, Speaking Out, which led to several prominent figures, like Joey Ryan and Gentleman Jack Gallaher, basically being run out of the sport. We saw so many figures in Hollywood finally come to justice, but the art world has been fairly quiet.

Though there have always been whispers.

The most important aspect, and as I mentioned with the Dusty Button issue, is that artists can make a lot of money teaching, and that means access to mostly young people. That's a recipe for disaster, and that's a part of what happened with Lévéque.

Hopefully, he goes down for a long, long time.







I Love Bob's Big Boy.

When I was a kid, a typical Saturday afternoon was my family going to a matinee at the Century 21 or 22 in San Jose. We'd swing by the Winchester House to play games in the arcade or to walk around the gardens, but before all of that, we'd go get breakfast at Bob's Big Boy. That represents three of the things that would go on to define much of my life—movies, the paranormal, and Family Restaurants.

I covered a bit of my love for the place in the coverage of my trip to LA, but I don't think I mentioned that I've been collecting Bob's Big Boy stuff lately and a big part of it has been TikTok.

Yes, I know I'm too old for TikTok.

Anyhoo, it started when I went to an event and ran into the Ephem-

era Society of America. I started going through various things they had, and there were a lot of collectors and dealers in old menus.

I love menus.

I used to, in my younger, more vulnerable years, take the occasional menu from a restaurant, but only if they were those booklet type, not the flimsy paper ones. I used to have a huge number of old pamphlets and a few menus I'd keep in a old clear storage bin. They've been lost for a couple of decades, but I loved them so. This is what moving does!

So, I started reading posts and articles about menus, and I saw a sale for a 1985 Bob's Big Boy menu. I instantly looked to see if the Fisherman's Platter was there, and by Jove it was! It's my all-time favorite meal (fried pollock, shrimp, and scallops, with French fries) and I did not know that back then, it was ten buck, a significant amount of money to spend on a 9 year old's dinner!

I bought it. It was ten bucks.

The next night, I posted a TikTok of me doing a reading of the menu. When I post me doing a reading, it's just me sitting and silently reading. Menus are perfect for that kind of performance art. They're colorful, easily recognizable, and people will talk about food. I posted it and it went over pretty well. My friend Living Dead Delilah posted saying that she had a Bob's Big Boy shirt and would I want it?

Now, let me say three things about Delilah—she's incredibly funny, she loves horror films, and is stunningly gorgeous. She also really likes chainsaw, though I think that might be an after-effect of her fond admiration for *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and it's 'hero', Leatherface.

Now, I comment on some of her posts, and here she was, asking if I'd like a Bob's Big Boy shirt! I said yes, she mailed it, and while it's in that awkward size between being too big for the kids and too small for me, it's got a place of honor in my shirt collection!

I bought a couple of more menus, a late 1970s and another from the 1980s, though not the same menu. It was one I remembered because it had the most perfect looking burger plate on the cover. I used to order the burger, but it was only OK, and what I really loved were the fries that came with it,

and especially the ketchup.

A few weeks later, my dear friend Chuck Serface, many time co-editor for *Journey Planet* and the King of Men, sent me a FuncoPOP figure of the Big Boy! It was perfect, and while Vanessa opens her's up when she gets them, I have mine in the box, displayed for me and kept dust free!

It's also harder for cats/kidses to known over if they're in the box.

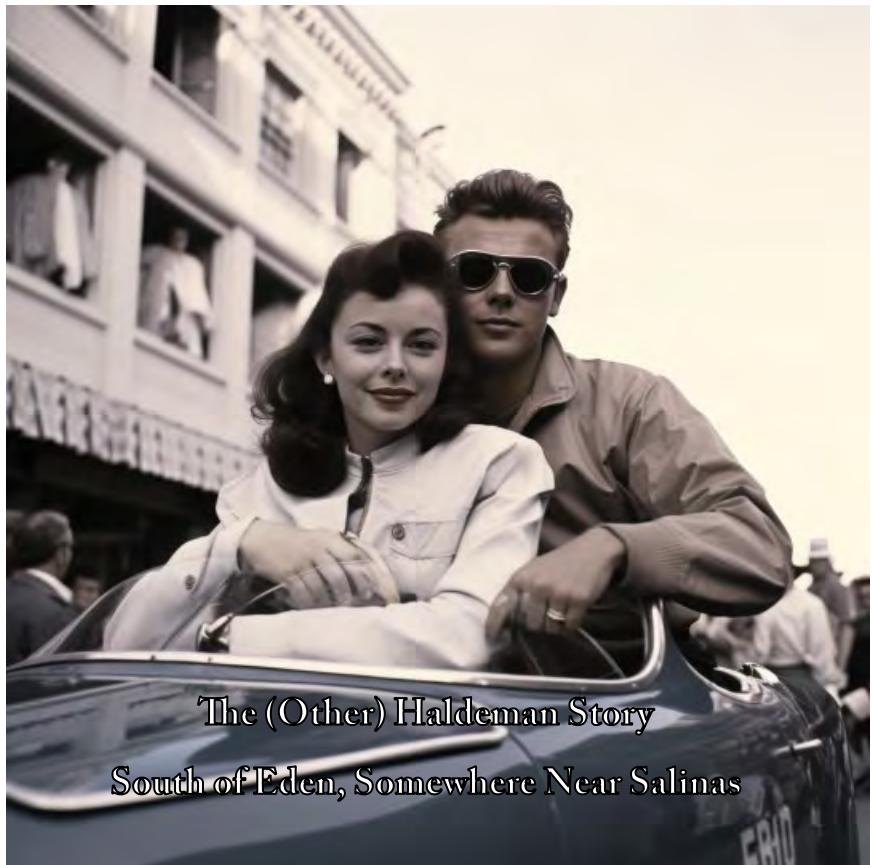
So, a few weeks later, my TikTok friend Oslowe recommends a friend to the world—Girl Henry Rollins. She's another GenX-Toker who happens to lead tours in Salem, Massachusetts. She's hilarious, and about a week after I added her, she mentioned that she had been given a Bob's Big Boy piggy bank! I always wanted one of those, but my family wouldn't buy me one when I was a kid, and when I was grown up, as collectibles they were out of my price range. This one was clearly from the late 1960s or early 70s. I asked her what she wanted for it, and she gave me a really low price, roughly half what I'd seen it for on eBay in comparable condition. She mailed it a few days later and now it lives on top of the TV stand with the boxed FuncoPop, staring out across the living room at the bookshelf with the Menus.

It ain't a huge collection, but I love it.

And I love TikTok!







The (Other) Haldeman Story South of Eden, Somewhere Near Salinas

This is another sports story, but it's more.

The anthology *By Any Other Fame*, is another AltHist collection by Resnick and Greenberg. It's a fun one, mostly light, and each story in it posits a different kind of fame for the iconic targets of their pieces. In this case, Haldeman uses the story of James Dean, but takes him from the world of Hollywood and turns him into a race car driver.

And Natalie Wood is his love interest, a reporter, and Sal Mineo plays his mechanic.

It's a cut story, very much a telling of almost every race car driver story (both fictional and real) that focuses on the need for speed as well as living fast in every area. Dean is presented as a speed-junky, well a goin'-fast junky, and Natalie is the woman who loves him, but sees that he's going to end up dead if he keeps pushing the envelop.

The story plays in a field that I can completely see—that James Dean was going to die, and likely in a fiery crash.

That's an interesting take, and there's a lot behind it. In the time, there was no question that he wasn't going to live long. There are stories of Dean's proclivities in Hollywood, some saying he was a human ashtray (I first heard that from Kenneth Anger, but then heard about a discussion with Vampira that confirmed that) and he clearly liked driving fast. He was a complicated guy, and the way he was presented on-screen wasn't completely different from who he was off-screen.

So, he kinda had to die.

The story is solid, and says as much about American mythmaking. No matter the field, there are archetypes, and the James Dean type is indelible.







God's curse upon you, John Russell, may the great queen Victoria rot in Hell.

This is my favorite lyric from a group that has flown under the radar for far too long—Black 47.

I've heard them referred to as the Pinnacle of Pub Rock. I don't quite agree, though watching the videos of their New York bar performances might prove me wrong. They had incredible energy, and the Irish Rock they played tread the lanes walked by Thin Lizzy far more than those by U2. I first heard of them in 1993 from an article in *Entertainment Weekly*, which I read religiously. I picked up their CD, *Fire of Freedom*, and put it in my CD player, then at-

tached with a tape-shaped adaptor to my 1974 Krylon Red Volvo.

It was amazing.

The album features three songs that are pretty fantastic, though the entire album is great.

Funky Ceili (Bridie's Song) is, in fact, a funky tune that details the story of a guy who knocks up his girlfriend, and is given the choice between castration or a one-way ticket to New York. It's a great song, a danceable song, and it's the first one I go back to every time I re-visit Black 47.

Maria's Wedding, a story of a guy who was desperate to get the woman he loves back and decided to wreck her wedding to another fella.

Oh Maria, I'm so sorry I wrecked your wedding
You've just gotta believe me
But just the thought of you takin' your clothes off
for that jerk
Oh, it got me drinkin' and then suddenly I'm stag-
gerin' into church
And I'm dancin' like Baryshnikov all across the high
altar
Oh I bet that you're still mortified
But just think, girl
No one's ever gonna be forgetting
The day I wrecked your wedding

Isn't that great!

The song is a bit more upbeat than *Funky Ceili*, and it's a classic. This one is pretty much what I think of when I think of Pub Rock. It's also one of the best uses of Uilleann pipes I've ever heard

in a rock song!

The best of them, though, is *James Connolly*.

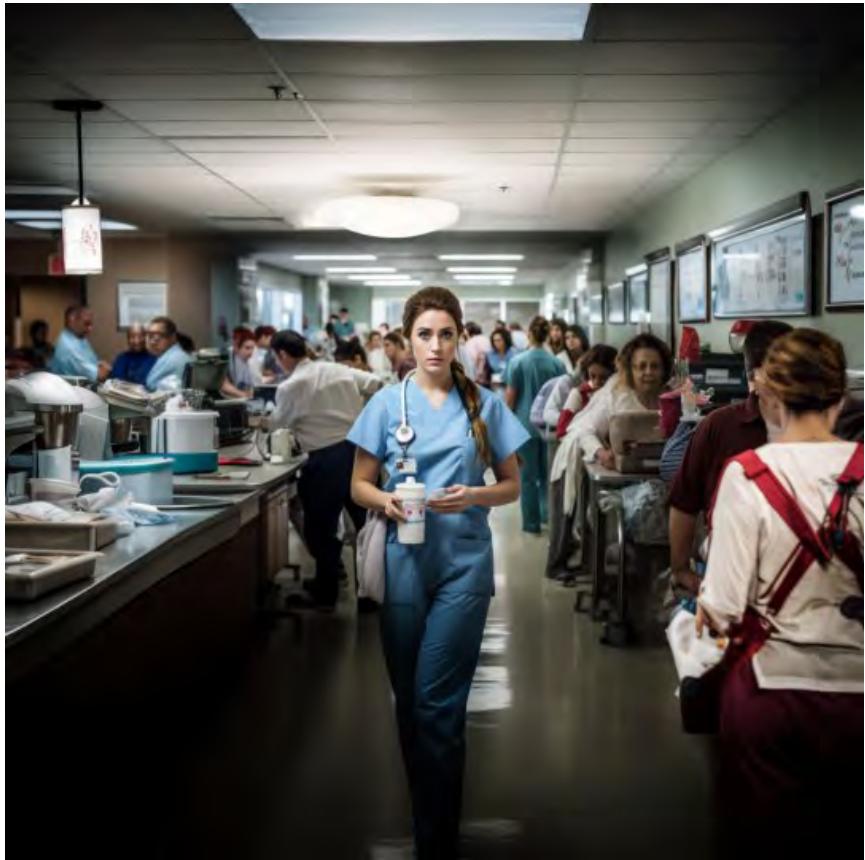
The story of James Connolly, and particularly his unjust execution for his role in the Easter Uprising, is covered beautifully in this song. There's a bit of Dylan's *The Story of Hurricane* in it, but it's so much more impressive because of the use of the pipes.

And Ric Ocasek's production.

Ric was one of the all-time great producers. I'd argue the Cars, with Ocasek, was one of the all-time great bands, but they were made entirely by brilliant producers like Roy Thomas Baker, and Ocasek himself at the end. His credits include Weezer's best albums, and this might be the smallest band he ever produced. I have found their other stuff, and there's nothing that hits this level.







So, I went to the hospital.

I felt weird, had arm pains, chest tightness, and just generally felt like I did in October when I went in and ended up having to stay for three days.

So, I went to the emergency room at Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz. On 4th of July.

The waiting room was empty, and so I got an EKG, bloodwork, and chest x-ray in about an hour. I've waited as long as four hours to even be checked in no less in and done! They all came back looking good, save for a minor strangeness on my chest x-ray.

It turns out there was a gas bubble high-up in my stomach, pressing against everything. That's never happened to me before, that I know of. The prescription: Gas-X and drinking lots of water. I laughed because I drink a ton

of water.

Other strange coincidence. The next morning, I took my pills—Techtronix (I think that's a stomach thing) Lipitor, and my blood pressure meds, Norvasc. I keep them in a container that has a section for day and a section for night meds. I forgot my night meds, my diabetes meds, a couple of times, but I've been religious about taking my morning meds. I leave the section where I've taken the pills from the morning open so I can tell if I still need to take my night pills. Highly effective.

So, I tipped the bottom portion of the container into my mouth, less than 7 hours after I got back from a cardiac workup, and failed to notice that my blood pressure pill had been caught in the lid. I didn't find out until the next morning.

Luckily, I feel fine and dandy, but still, weird.





That's enough for this time!

Today, which is before you're reading this, *Journey Planet* was nominated for the Hugo award! It's our tenth, I think, and it's for a set of issues that I'm really glad we managed. There were times it did not seem likely.

There's a minor issue with how many people exactly were actually finalists, and I still can't answer that, and we're working on getting something at the business meeting to settle that hash.

This issue was pretty much all Kauai Coffee Vanilla Macadamia Nut blend, except for the last article. I cheated: it was Ginger Tea that one.

Next Time—The 2021 Video Registry, The (Other) Haldeman Story, UFO thoughts, and probably a bunch about True Crime (Paul Bernardo, Alison Mack, and more)







Claims Department

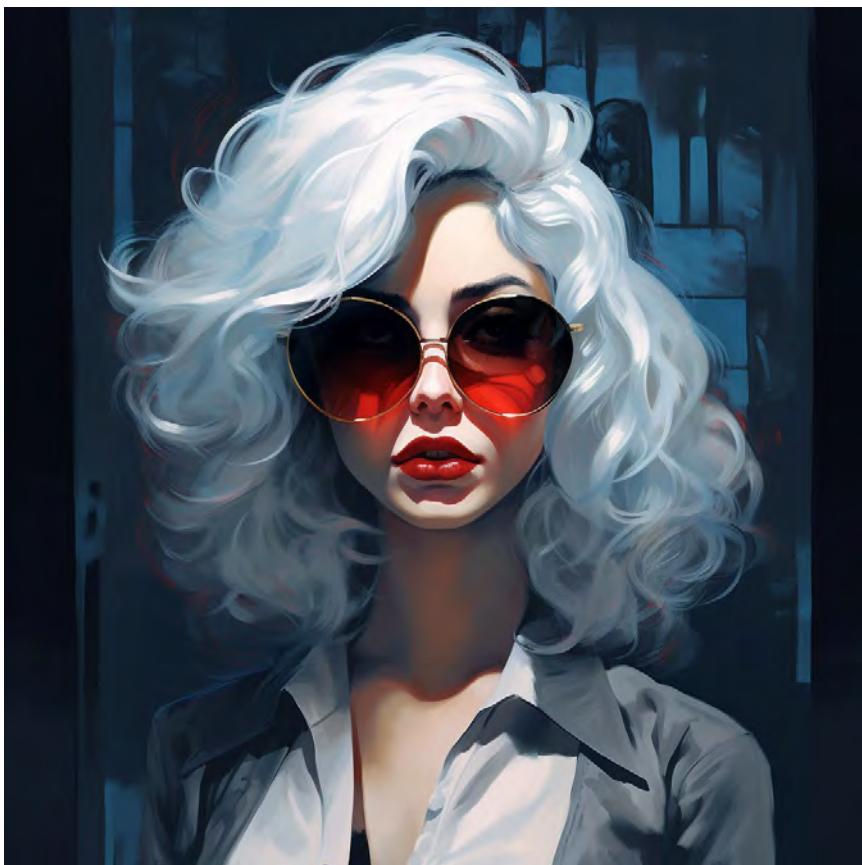
How ya doin' 'ever'body>

Me? I'm OK. After my trip to the hospital last week, things are looking up. I'm not 100%, and if it's just some weird gas-thing, that beats the alternative, but certainly not feelin' bad!

Work has me doing a lot of layout. So, I've got experience layin' out books now! I like that.

I'm still waiting on word from various things I've applied for, and there's one place that wants me to apply, though it's part-time, though a curatorship.

OK, on with it!





True Crime News

Paul Bernardo is being moved.

To most of you, that might not mean much, but to our Canadian readers, and True Crime nerds, that might be scary. It's actually less scary than you'd think, but it does show some of the differences between the US and Canadian criminal justice system.

Paul Bernardo, also known as the Scarborough Rapist, is a piece of human garbage. He was responsible for more than a dozen rapes, and that was before he met his main accomplice—Karla Holmolka. The pair of them murdered three girls before they were caught. They became known as the Ken and Barbie Killers, but there was nothing cute about what they did. They first

paired up in raping and murdering Karla's sister Tammy. Karla got her sister to take the drugs that knocked her out, and she watched while Paul had his way with her body, though she may have been dead at the time.

That is how sick these two were—Karla had wanted to give Tammy's virginity to Paul as a Christmas gift. Tammy was 15.

The pair then kidnapped a fourteen year old, Leslie Mahaffy, bound and assaulted her, video taping the process. The pair dismembered Mahaffey's body.

Kristen French was next. Karla got French's attention, allowing Paul to grab her. They taped themselves again assaulting French, and then they murdered her.

Karla copped a plea; the cops thought she was an innocent victim of Paul's mind-control. This was flat-out wrong, but when the tapes came to light, it was too late and Holmolka was granted a sentence of twelve years for two counts of manslaughter. This, sometimes called The Deal with the Devil, meant she only did twelve years, getting out in 2005.

Paul is in there for pretty-much ever.

Paul was held in Maximum security prisons for thirty years. That's incredibly rare, as the way Canadian prison systems are set-up aren't the same as the US. In the US, Bernardo would be held in Super-Max for the length of his sentence. In Canada, you're usually only held in Maximum until you can be moved to Medium Security for the main length of your term. Eventually, the goal is to move a prisoner to Minimum Security in preparation for release.

Recently, the Canadian Prison system moved Bernardo from Maximum Security to Medium Security.

Now, this is strange to Americans, who see Paul Bernardo as the dangerous criminal that he certainly is, but the Canadian Prison System sees that Medium security is the place for long-term holding, even for significantly dangerous criminals. The reason Paul was held in Maximum Security for so long, more than 30 years, is that he was seen as likely to be the target of attack by other inmates. That makes sense, and he'll likely be in solitary, as he has been for his time in MaxSec, because other inmates really wanna kill him. While this wouldn't be a great loss, it would be wrong to set him in a scenario where that could likely happen.

The thing is, without him becoming a near-complete invalid, he's never getting placed into Minimum security. Minimum Security is meant to be the transitional phase before release, and that's never going to happen for Bernardo, even though by law he has to be given a parole hearing every other year.

He's gonna die in prison. That's a good thing from where I sit. He's dangerous, and as much as we want to believe that people can be reformed, I don't believe it's true for those that go so far beyond the pale into true, unquestionable evil.

Holmolka, on the other hand, got off too easy, and has been in the spotlight ever since. Her argument has always been that she was an unwilling participant. The videos say otherwise, though as far as we can tell, she's been good ever since. Part of the reason for that has been that she's been scrutinized pretty much since her release, and that's meant she has had to toe the line. This is a case where shaming works really well!





There may be exotic materials on the bottom of the ocean.

This one is interesting on a couple of levels. Avi Loeb has said that he may be in possession of Alien tech that he found a few spherical pieces, one of which he claims looks like a representation of the Earth, that came from when he dredged up using magnets from a meteorite landing site on the bottom off the coast of Papua New Guinea.

The small sphericals were gathered with the magnets, and apparently the thing was tougher than almost all the materials found on Earth, and those are incredibly rare to find falling from the sky. The sphericals are distinct from the rest of the meteorite, which is

interesting because it would be an indicator, potentially, of alien tech.

Now, there are some questions.

Loeb has been a big proponent of the Oumuamua item. It was an object that was observed a few years back and seemed to be accelerating and decelerating, and perhaps even maneuvering! There are explanations for that, including that it's got stuff inside, trapped gases or other matter, and as it warms it's expanding and that leads to acceleration. An interesting theory. The weirder thing is that it's entered and left our solar system twice.

If these things are alien tech, then there's a new problem: what exactly is the tech meant to do. One theory is that they're markers, like the reflectors we have on the moon. They allow for location of the Earth at any given time, even as we travel through space. Something that is forgotten is that we're never in the same place twice, as the sun is not a static item in the universe either. If aliens wanted to visit, they would need some form of marker to keep track of our location.





Yeah, things are hard around here.

We're losing our insurance, though we've got a few months to figure something out. We had MediCal, but since we didn't have to reapply during COVID, and I was given MediCal during the brief period I was unemployed for the first time, we only now had to submit our paystubs and are no longer eligible.

That REALLY sucks for us.

We're scraping by (so buy my book!) but adding whatever it's gonna cost us to get insurance through the exchange, PLUS the cost of my four prescriptions and Vanessa's seven, will likely lead to us having to make some really hard choices.

I live pretty close to the bone already. Other than gas and food, I don't spend much. We went to Maui on my Mom's dime, and we went to all the cons this year for various generous offers, but those are basically our little escapes. Even WrestleMania weekend was nearly completely gifted!

The problem we have is we make the 300% the national poverty rate, and when you adjust for local costs, we're at about 90% of Bay Area cost of living. That makes a lot of programs out of reach to us.

Still, the kids are gonna be covered because 1) they were born more than 30 days pre-mature, and 2) JP's cerebral palsy means he's covered more-or-less for life.

We did get into a program called Healthy Plates that allows us to get fifteen bucks of free produce from the local Farmer's Market, and every little bit helps. I also happen to know that the Farmer's Market has some of the best mushrooms, garlic, and artichokes in the area!



rimamotan.gon



Leslie Van Houten is free.

This has been a long-time coming for the former Manson girl, and it's one that will always be argued. She was on death row for a while, but her sentence was commuted when all death sentences were commuted in the 1970s. She was considered one of the least dangerous of the Manson girls, though none are seen as major threats today (and I've heard that of the other Mansonites in prison, Patricia Krenwinkle, Tex Watson, Bobby Beausoleil, and Bruce Davis, only Watson is seen as still dangerous, partly due to his joining up with White Nationalists) and KRenwinkle was paroled last year as well, though still behind bars.

This is a tough one.

The LaBianca murders are often over-looked in favor of the Tate-Seybring-Folger-Frykowski-Parent murders on Cielo Drive. They were grocers, and not a part of the Hollywood scene. They were murdered by Watson, Krenwinkle, and Van Houten then murdered Rosemary and Leno LaBianca, with Van Houten stabbing Rosemary a dozen times while Krenwinkle held her down. Watson apparently delivered the killing blow, and there was a cadre of others who went to the house with them and left—Clem Grogan (who was released in 1985 and I'm still not sure why), Susan Atkins, Linda Kasabian (who died in prison this year) and Manson himself were there and left. They were all convicted.

OK, enough tap-dancing; should she have been released?

On this one, I'm of two minds, and one of them is that yes, she should be freed. She was under the spell of Manson, and even years after her imprisonment, she was still. A lot of work with her fellow Manson girls and social workers broke her free, and she's been a model prisoner for decades. She's clearly no longer a threat to public safety, she's old and apparently frail with long-term health issues (likely exacerbated because of prison conditions) and the world will not be more dangerous with her on the outside.

On the other hand, she participated in the murder of a woman, clearly.

If she had simply walked into the house and murdered Rosemary LaBianca, I would 100% be for leaving her in prison until the day she died, but she was brainwashed, no other way to put it, and though some Manson family members showed clear reluctance (Linda Kasabian at the Cielo Drive murders, for example) Van Houten really didn't. She did what she was told. When she was de-

conditioned, she expressed extreme remorse and came to understand her role, but also that she wasn't in her right mind.

She also made powerful friends.

One of whom was John Waters, who write often advocating for her release. He brought attention to the idea that there is a timeframe when the punishment is enough, and though I don't know if I believe that in all cases, here I pretty much do. I almost see it as the person who committed those crimes died, killed by years of therapy, and while Van Houten still had to pay for the crimes, she did so over 50 years. This is an edge case, but it's one that I think has turned out fairly, even if the Tates, the most visible of the victims' families, are furious at the decision. I do wish it was instead of full parole, it had been release to a monitored living situation, Half-way houses, situational release (such as allowing for work or study outside of prison) or other sort of re-introduction programs should be used, not only for public safety, but to more gradually re-introduce the former prisoner into the world today.

Because the one she left was incredibly different.







Listening to Karlheinz Stockhausen is sometimes a chore.

There's something there, though, that is almost magical. The first piece of his I ever heard, *Wasserman*, was actually delightfully strange, and it reminded me of the 1960s Disneyland music. It's actually got a little more to it, and I love re-listening to it and finding the connections to other things I've heard. You can hear a lot of what we're hearing in pop music today from those early recordings. They're haunting, *Wasserman* in particular. There's the whole *Tubular Bells* thing in there, but there's a sense of space established by it that feels so empty, but not in a minimalist sense. *Model 1*, which is largely a drone, feels as if it is exploring the depths of a cavern that

turns out to be full of unseen life. There are pieces that feel as if they are in communication with machines, attempting to develop some sort of common vocabulary.

And that's something I got out of his work I never expected: language.

Many of his pieces are written as if they are short, sometimes momentary, phrases, and then come responses to those phrases. This makes his work feel at least somewhat conversational. Even when the pieces are designed to emphasize decay and non-determinist writing, I'm thinking of a piece like *Spiral for Saxophone and Shortwave Radio Receiver*, when you're getting is a lecture from a saxophone, trying to break-through the static and distortion. The phrases are clear, and when taken without the background noise, they lose coherence. It is a statement without a meaning, and that is hard to pull off in many medium.

Stockhausen often worked in systems, concepts that determined what the music would be even seemingly without direct interaction with the object of the sound production. It was a form of access music, music that is acquired less than produced and certainly less than written.

This is, of course, ridiculous.

Everything is constructed, and the result of that construction may not be clear at the time of that construction, but the path is evident, no doubt. This is why Stockhausen was a genius, and one that I think is unfairly forgotten in favorite of composers like Legeti, who is far more patallatable to the non-avant garde listener.

Stockhausen produced work at CCRMA at Stanford, or at least did work there. I think that alone makes him worthy of study!



OK< that's all.

A short issue, largely because I've got *Journey Planet* layout to do!

I'm putting together an exhibit for the Boulder Creek Library on Satoryan for next month, and that's gonna be a lot of fun. The Santa Cruz Library System is doing a series of Hugo Award-winning movies, and I hope to can go to at least one. It's always good to see the Hugos getting love.

Sadly, many of us who do zines that are nominated are not getting love from the Admins AGAIN, but hopefully this'll be temporary.

My book comes out in two weeks in the UK. It's got a couple of months before the US release. I'm excited!

I'm doing a series of San Jose stories on TikTok. I'm enjoying them!

OK, I'll see y'all next time!





Claims Department







There's a foot fondler in Lake Tahoe.

Now, there are a lot of foot fondlers in the alternative news these days. There was a hotel employee who would break into hotel rooms and suck on men's toes. This one breaks into woman's homes and fondles their feet. They've struck at least twice, and are unapprehended.

Now, on one level, this is a humorous headline, right? Someone breaks in and fondles feet in the night.

The quiet part there is the breaks in.

Now, there's the slippery slope argument, that simply doing another crime makes it far more likely that you'll do a far greater crime. Maybe, but really, there are plenty of criminals that start with tiny things that are only vaguely crimes when they start breaking in to houses. It's believed that the

Golden State Killer, Joseph D'Angelo, started his career as a ransacker and pretty thief. Now, it may never go beyond the fondling of feet, but it certainly feels as if it's going to get bigger. If a guy finds that he has access and can get away with entering and fondling a woman's feet, you can get away with going further, taking advantage of the fact that they are asleep, emboldened by the reality that they've gotten away with it so far.

And that's the scary part to me.

I've spent a lot of time in Tahoe over the decades. I had family up there when I was a kid, and it's been one of my favorite places. I even took John Coxon there on his TAFF trip. It's a beautiful place, and that this is happening there is a real fright.

Of course it could be that the fondler's paraphilia is specific to feet, and any escalation would not give them the thrill they want. The question is likely about why they do it, and it's likely not just for the feet, but for the act of fondling the feet of someone who does not consent to it. It ain't hard to get foot fetish fantasies fulfilled these days, and that would indicate that these crimes are a part of a larger, or at least broader, fetish.







True Crime News keeps on coming!

The Long Island Serial Killer (LISK) murdered at least 16 people, mostly women, but also a guy and at least one child. For the first time, there's been an arrest. The same day that started to get around, there's been a major development in the JonBenet Ramsey case, now more than 25 years cold.

The LISK case is the most interesting to me personally, though I've had periods of intense research into JonBenet. LISK was the most significant serial killer of recent years who was uncaught, and as such, had gotten a lot of attention from True Crime media, especially podcasts. There's been a lot of criticism that there may be

police corruption involved as the reason there was seemingly so little movement on the case for so long, and it's highly likely that major clues were missed and leads not followed up. There was a release of some evidence in 2020, and with it being lockdown, all sorts of armchair investigators got into the action. It was kinda like a crowd-sourced cozy mystery in the real world. The big announcement was that they had a belt with 'HW' (or maybe MH, it's hard to tell which way is up) and there were further identifications, as many of the bodies were, and still are, unidentified.

The real key here was that these women were sex workers and many had been using Craigslist as a way to get johns. One of the names for the killer, The Craigslist Ripper, is kinda brutal to me personally because Craig is such a nice guy!

He's only been charged with four murders, but there are certainly others that he committed, and it's possible that there was more than one person dumping bodies there. The Craigslist tie, though, makes it highly possible that this was largely the work of one person.

JonBenet Ramsey is a case that has driven American True Crime nerds crazy for a generation, and the public emergence of Olivia as a strong suspect is huge. There's a lot of conversation about him, he's been on the suspect list for years, though when his DNA was tested in 2000, it didn't match. That's why there wasn't movement on him then, though he had been brought to the attention of John Ramsey back then to get a closer look.

And that right there should tell you all you need to know about the handling of the case.

Olivia is a pedophile, and apparently has claimed that he has killed other children, though this isn't proven. It's known that he

had child porn on his computer, and that landed him in the clink for 10 years. Now that he's about to come up for parole, his friend who he wrote a letter to saying that he hurt a little girl. He said it was an accident.

The cops, and Jon Ramsey who in many ways controlled the investigation, have various theories, but were in the know on the guy, but apparently he fell off the radar when the DNA didn't match. The cops think more than one person was involved, and that is potentially possible. I do kinda think that Patsy Ramsey wrote the note, perhaps discovering JonBenet, thinking that either Jon or Burke had done it and then writing the note to throw them off the scent. Jon Ramsey thinks that whoever did it broke in more than once, and that was how they discovered the amount of the bonus he had been paid so they could exactly ask for that much ransom, which is a bit of a stretch. There is, in fact, 0 evidence that there was any tie between the author of the note and the actual killing. In fact, there's 0 evidence that the one who caused the head injury is the same one that tied the garrote around her neck with the paintbrush and cord. One theory, and the only multi-killer theory I kinda buy into, is that whoever abused her and potentially tried to kidnap her caused the injury to her head, then left her there. Patsy went down-stairs and found her, nearly dead, and finished the job, or at least thought she was finishing the job. She may have even thought it was one of the other members of the family. It's an absolute stretch, but that would explain the various inconsistencies within the crime.

Olivia was about 13 houses away from the Ramseys, he became obsessed with her, having hundreds of pictures of her downloaded from the internet, and he sent letters confessing to harming some kids. It's not open-and-shut, and he's never confessed to the cops, but this is a more than compelling suspect, and the first one

who fits into several boxes.

It also makes this case seem even more like the Lindbergh baby, no?

So, two big cold cases getting at least a little less cold. The real question is what are we gonna find out on the other big cases of the last thirty years. We've got the murder of Star Stowe and The Notorious B.I.G. and Tupak all might be solved, which would be huge.

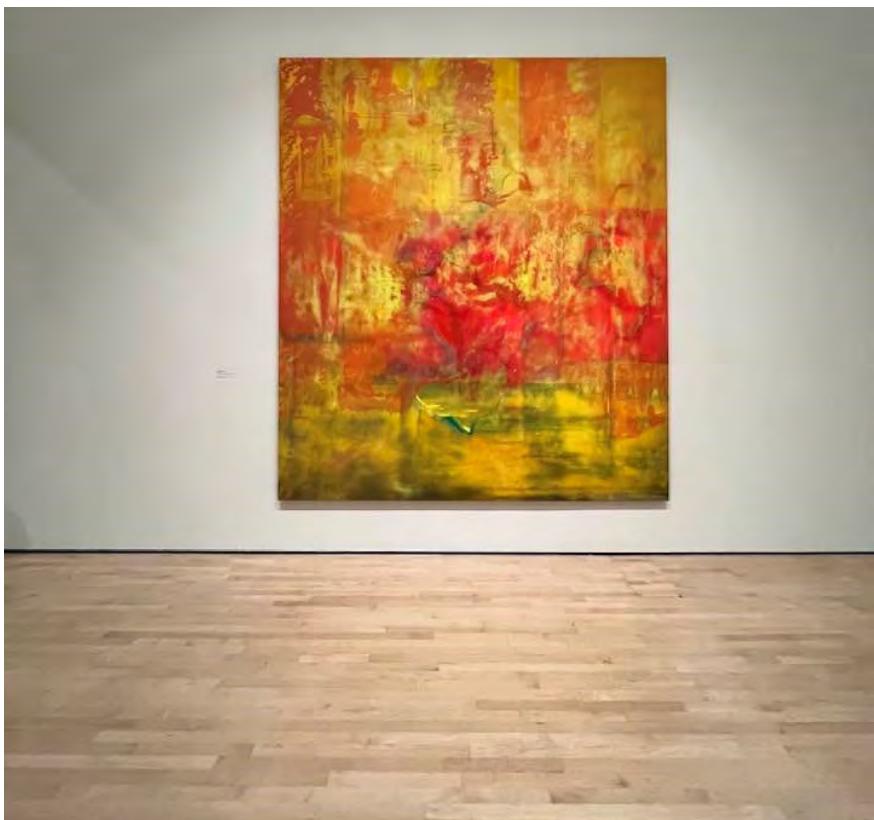




I did go to SFMoMA and found a new artist that I really enjoy.

This isn't rare. SFMoMA has introduced me to so many artists I was not aware of, but Frank Bowling is a rare instance of an artist whose work is nearly in the exact center of my wheelhouse who I didn't know.

His stuff ranges from Abstract Expressionist to POP to Lyrical Abstraction, to something I'd call Pseudo-representational Surrealism. His works, some of them huge for gallery works, tread between the world of the mural and the hung painting, use elements such as continental forms, to seed a sort of geopolitical abstraction. In essence, it is the abstraction of the idea of a map meaning a location and instead representing the idea of a place itself in diaspora.













You can still see the Bowling exhibit up until September 10th. If'n you're gonna be in town, and wanna go and see it, I've got a membership and I'd love to join ya to see it, and the rest of the museum, on me!





I've got so much to say about my new diet.

So, I've been having bouts of blood pressure spikes. They're not getting into the dangerous range, but 155/95 ain't exactly great. When we test in the morning, it's usually in the 125/85 range, which is much better. I bought a watch to monitor that and my blood sugar.

I've cut out red meat. After having to increase my portion size because I was starving all the time, I've gone back to the portion control I was doing from the days I first got diagnosed. It's not easy, I spend much of my time starving, but I do wanna get things better under control. Thus, when I cook, it's almost 0 salt, I watch sodium



in my purchased foods (and it's hard to find anything with flavor that doesn't have a ton!) and have been cutting carbs as well, best I can.

Honestly, I don't miss salt, or sugar, though I do miss things like Cheese (which I haven't all the way cut out, but am limiting only to the quesadilla portions that Bella don't eat) and Peanut Butter (which I still eat a bit of but I'm certainly cutting down on that) and chips and salsa.

My tomato soup lunches, with cashews and meat mixture, are not filling, but are tasty and usually last me well until I get home. I've been doing at least one meal every couple of days that's meatless, in this case either soup or sauted mushrooms. I'm down to 211 pounds as of July 4th, though I might have lost another pound or two. I seemed to have shed about 12 pounds between mid-October and late December last year, and I was doing roughly the same.

Still, Mushroom and lots of ginger, basil, blueberries and raspberries, tea and just one cup of coffee seems to agree with me.







I'm loving this heatwave~

No, I haven't been replaced by some sort of weird robot, I'm actually enjoying having to get the kids out and about for the day. We don't have air conditioning, so we've got to find it where we can. This heatwave, where it's supposed to hit 100, we've gone to the Felton Library in the beautiful mountain town of Felton. I plug in my laptop and the kids ran off to grab books and read in these onion like pods they have in the kids section. Bella is usually the one that will park in one for a while, but this time, it was JP who found a place and just sat there for about an hour.

On the way, we stopped briefly at an antique car show!







While it wasn't a huge car show, there were a few really cool pieces, like a gorgeous old Corvette, a couple of Model Ts, a lovely jalopy called 'Jolene' and one of the greatest cars ever displayed—an old racer shaped like a Kaiser Bill-era German helmet! It was straight out of Whacky Racers!

We only stayed a couple of minutes, but it was a good time. We maybe walked around for ten minutes, but Bella did not stop talking about how I should trade in my car for that Corvette.

No. Just no.

We headed to the library where the air-conditioning was working and while it's a smaller library, I did manage to find a bunch of books for both the kids and for me! Mostly, I grabbed cookbooks and art books, largely so that I could get pics of recipes and artworks for when I start doing *Three Minute Modernist* again. Which I keep saying will be sooner than the later that it's turned out to be.

We enjoy libraries in general, and Felton's is new and fairly nice. It wasn't crowded, there were a few kids, and I got a lot of writing done. In fact, most of what you'll read in the next two *Drink Tanks* from me will have been written in the Felton Library.

I also, of course, asked how I could do my Booklaunch reading there, and filled out a form!

I'm exceptionally happy that both my kids love books. Not always reading, but always books. I'm no longer a big reader, but there's no question that my greatest object fascination is with books as artworks. I love the form, the feeling, the sensation of a book in the hand, the look of a book open on a table. It's probably why I love my job so much. I am surrounded by books, get to create books myself, and just live books!

We got tired, and I got hungry, so we headed into Santa Cruz. Vanessa, who was at home resting and getting ready to bring in two new Shopsmiths to our garage, thought that there would be insane traffic in and out of Santa Cruz, this being the first heatwave of the summer, but alas, it didn't seem so. We got in and enjoyed our little drive, though we didn't get lunch until AFTER we spent a couple of hours there. I got books, and typed; the kids watched their iPads. It was cooler than at home, but it was a lot like what might be going on had we stayed at home...

...with less sweating.





I got to go to Stanford's Special Collections.

I love researching in University libraries. I get to do it for work, and I sometimes do it for my hobbies. I've spent time with James in the Fullerton Library, checking out Dune materials and K. Dick stuff. I've set up appointments at various libraries and had varying levels of success getting to look at things I've wanted to see for years.

I was researching William Saroyan this time, and looking at letters to the man from folks like Martin Sheen (a get-well letter as Saroyan was dying) The Supremes, Katherine Hepburn, and Manuel

Tolegian, a painter whose stuff I'm really digging right now. I'll be going back a few times over the next few months.

I really wanna dig in on the three big, rest-of-my-life-likely projects that require archive research. The first is a catalog of pro wrestling related items in museums around the world. It would be a huge project, and there are places I'd love to get to that I would have huge problems getting access to, like The Met, MFA in Boston, and even MoMA can be a challenge. Still, it's the one I really wanna start in on seriously.

The second is the one that I really want to get on with is the work of Delphyne. I really wanna document her output in a serious way, and that's gonna require a bunch of archive work. Luckily, I've been given a staunch of zines that had a bunch of stuff from her print.

The final one, and this one is huge, is the evolution of the use of Computers in the Arts in the form of a virtual collection. That one I've worked on professionally, and have not entirely stopped working on it!

And, of course, that's along with scanning everything I've got on hand and making that available. The Kris P. Lettuce Wrestling Drive has truly influenced on thinking on that matter.

These projects basically mean I need to become fabulously wealthy so that I can travel to the sites and not miss paychecks! Plus, gotta get help with the kids in the near-term.

Someday. Someday.



That's this issue!

I'm looking forward to August, though first MY BOOK COMES OUT IN THE UK NEXT WEEK!!!

I'll be doing annoying amounts of self-promotion, especially since my advance just came through this morning! It's gonna be a good few days, and then I'll be watching Amazon.uk like a freakin' hawk for the next eternity.

I'm celebrating by drinking an extra cup of Kauai Vanilla Macadamia Nut coffee. The rest of this issue was writer while drinking Kauai's Garden Isle blend, though I've got a Don Francisco's Kona blend that's waiting for me to break into it!

All the art was by MidJourney, save for my pics. I've taken a lot of them lately.

I'll be sticking close to home except for two trips without dates. One will be to NYC and one to Miami. The NYC trip will center about the need to interview a few folks, and then to get to the NY Public Library Theatre Collection and Columbia's fanzine collection. I'll also likely be visiting the Whitney (free admission as a member of SFMoMA!) and and potentially MoMA and The Met.

And if there's a miracle, talking to Lenny Kaye!







Claims Department

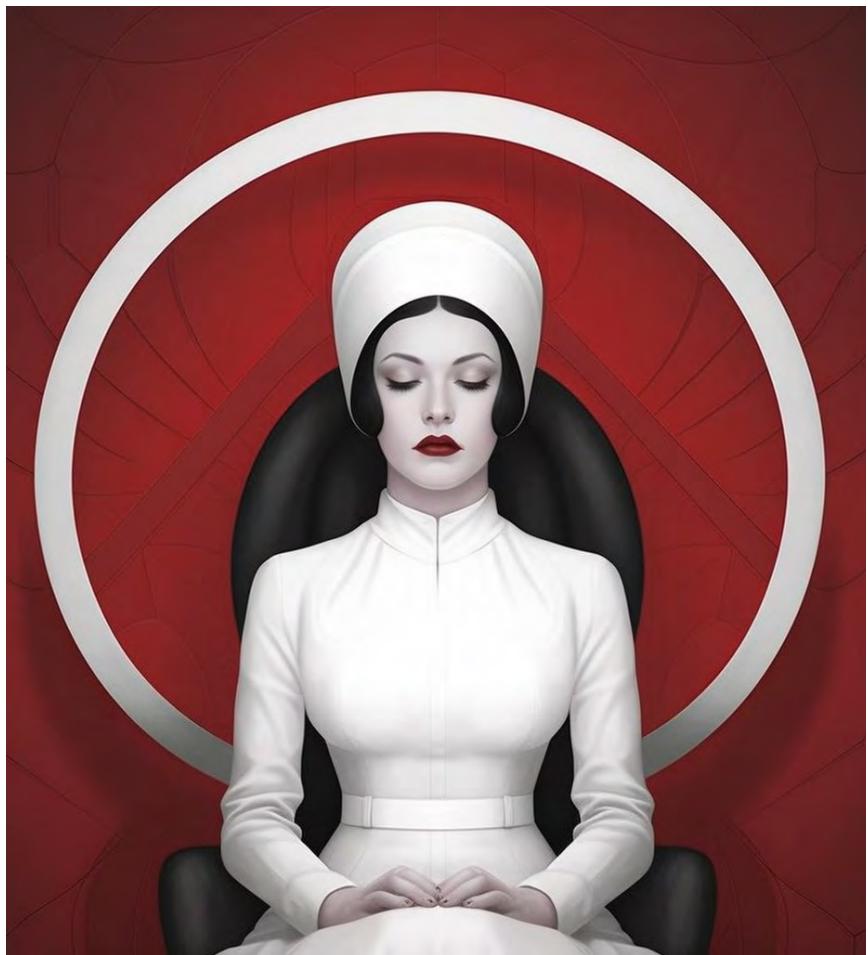
This one is going to be two-sided: one about LISK, the Long Island Serial Killer, and one about the music of REM.

It's gonna be a ride.

The arrest of Rex Heuerman was the start for this one, but really, I'd been writing to write about this case.

I've always wanted to do a bit of a deep-dive into REM because, hey, REM.

Comments? johnnyeponymous@gmail.com





The Long Island Serial Killer: LISK: Part 1

Monday, July 17, Kauai Coffee Garden Isle blend

His name is Rex Heuermann. He was arrested for the murders of three of the four women found on Gilgo Beach on Long Island in 2010. This was the start of the hunt for the Long Island Serial Killer, but more than that, it was the start of the search, maddening at times, for a killer of four women, the potential killer of a dozen more, and a long fight which ended up bringing down a Sheriff and involving the FBI.

It also ended in an arrest of a suspect who seems really good for it and should have been brought in ages ago.

There's a lot here, and it all starts with Shannan Gilbert.

In May of 2010, an escort made a call to 9-1-1 saying that "they're trying to kill me." She had been working as an escort, and had gone on a call to a gated community in Oak Beach. After things took a deadly turn, she ran and made a 9-1-1 call that lasted more than 20 minutes. The call ended, and she wasn't heard from again.

That summer, a search was launched with an officer and a cadaver dog. It didn't yield anything and it was stopped, but that December the search was launched anew, this time closer to the road. The dog hit upon a scent, and a body was found.

Three days later, they found another.

And another.

And another.

It was on Gilgo Beach that four young women were discovered, each wrapped in camouflage burlap. They'd been dead a while, and it's possible they'd been in that exact location for a while, too,

how long no one knows, but likely a while. The condition of the remains were variable, indicating that they'd not been killed at the same time. Melissa Barthelemy's body was the first discovered, but they would not be able to identify her for a month. She was 24, a sex worker and apparently found clients via Craigslist. She went missing in July, 2009.

But her cellphone was used to make calls to the family throughout the summer of 2009.

This is a huge part of the case. Taunting calls are not unusual for serial killers, the Golden State Killer made them for instance, but this is slightly different because the calls came from the victim's phone, adding the hope that she was alive to the sheer perverted audacity of the violation of the family. These calls came from Freeport, from Manhattan and Lindenhurst, and most importantly, from Massapequa.

Rex Heuermann lived in Massapequa, and worked in Manhattan. Freeport and Lindenhurst are just about equidistant from Gilgo Beach, maybe twenty minutes.

The call that gets brought up the most went to Barthelemy's sister; "do you think you'll ever see her again? You won't, I killed her."

And then he hung up.

In time, the police found that Barthelemy was likely the second victim of the four. The first was Maureen Brainard-Barnes.

In 2007, Maureen was last seen in July, 2007. She had lost her telemarketing job, so she turned to sex work, again using Craigslist to gather clients. She was seen in NYC, but then found in an advanced state of decay, wrapped in camouflage burlap, on Gilgo

Beach.

As far as I can see, there were no taunting phone calls, but the cellphone may have been less widely-used in 2007. It could also be that he simply didn't get the phone. Her cause of death was undetermined, she had been decomposing for three years, but there were no obvious signs of trauma such as a gunshot wound or blunt force trauma. It was later determined that she had been strangled, as had Barthelemy.

The third victim, Megan Waterman, was last seen in June, 2010, was also strangled. She was only 22, but was already a mother of one young child. She too had placed ads on Craigslist as an escort, though I've seen it said that she had been sex trafficked. She was also, by a good six inches, the tallest of the women found on Gilgo Beach.

The final victim, Amber Lynn Costello, had lived a hard life. Sexually abused as a child, she turned to drugs while in high school, and was a heroin addict. She disappeared in September of 2010, and her family thought that she was finally seeking rehab because she'd wanted to quit. Apparently, she had been doing sex work to fund her habit. She had been married twice, and at 27 was the oldest of the Gilgo Beach 4. She was strangled.

Other than strangulation, sex work, and being fairly young, there was another commonality: size. Three were under five feet tall, and the tallest, Waterman, was still fairly slight. They all appear to have gone out on calls, to motels, and that was the last they were heard from.

Rex Heuermann has been charged with the murders of Waterman, Costello, and Barthelemy, but not Brainard-Barnes. This is important for a few reasons.



REM and Me: High School

Sophomore year and we built a Homecoming float.

The class had chosen my house to do the building of the thing, a truly monstrous thing, because we had space and my Mom was easily convinced. The garage was taken over and kids were staying over pretty much every night for two weeks. One of them, easily the most beautiful girl I had ever seen in person, brought over a couple of tapes. One of them was They Might Be Giants' *Flood*, and I'll say a lot more about that when the time comes, but the other was a band I had never heard of, but would quite literally intersect with just about every significant portion of my life through to today.

REM.

Now, I was fond of 1980s music at the time, it was just 1990 afterall, and you could still hear *Sowing the Seeds of Love* and *Wild Wild West* on the radio. I knew a lot about bands like The Talking Heads, but I must admit, I wasn't as much into the college radio scene, or Modern Rock as we called it in these parts. I remember taking the combo record-tape-cd-radio system into the garage and we'd blast the tapes she'd brought with her. *Flood* was great, but *Green*, that was revelatory.

The album was REM at their jangliest. It's an album that opens with the best example of REM at that moment when they were clearly about to explode, and moreover, that alternative was going to pop into the mainstream. It's clear when you listen to *Pop Song 89*, that they're making a play for mainstream radio play, while still commenting on the obliviousness of the music industry as a whole. They follow with *Get Up*, which is a song I never liked, that gives us a starker more segmented song. *You Are Everything* hits with mandolin, and it seems to be presaging their run from 1990 through their album *Monster*, but really, it's a lovely little song with lame lyrics.

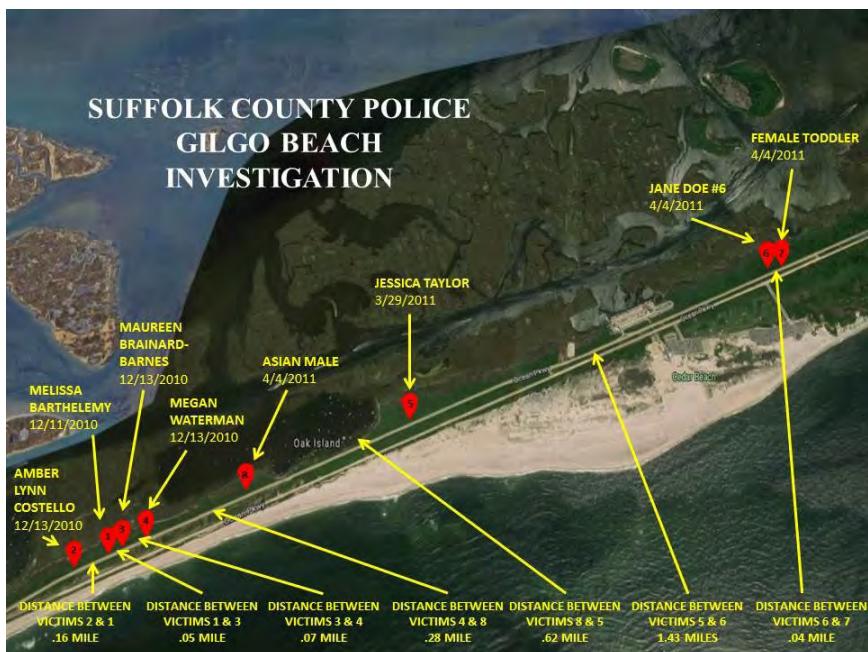
I may be in the minority on that matter.

The song *Stand* hit the mainstream radio world, the second time they'd managed that feat after *It's the End of the World as We Knew it* a couple of years before, but this was a bigger hit.

The best song on the album, and possibly my favorite REM song is *Orange Crush*. It's one of the starkest, tensest songs REM ever put out, and it's a Vietnam song. The lyrics hit, and hammer, but really, when I re-listen, what I'm catching is REM being a tiered band, where they can't break away from the jangle, or the sometimes obtuse lyrics, but somehow it works better than anything from *Document*, including *The One I Love*, which is a great song that I only vaguely knew.

And that's the thing about REM in 1990, I may have been aware of many of their songs, I did listen to Live 105 afterall, but I didn't know the band. They hit in a very different way when I finally had access to an album.

There's only one seriously flawed song, *Untitled* right at the end, when it's clear they wanna do a Smiths song, and can't.



LISK—Part 2—Costa Rica Light Roast Blend from Jenna Sue's

Those were not the only bodies.

The Gilgo Four set off a wild search for more potential victims on and around Gilgo Beach. Almost from the moment that Melissa Bathelemy was found, they'd been talking about a potential serial killer. Once the first four were found, it was clear from the way the bodies had been disposed of, the same method of execution, and the repeating pattern of victim type, that it was clearly the work of a serial killer, and likely that meant more victims would be found, likely in the same area, likely displaying the same MO.

They found several bodies, but it wasn't so clear cut.

This was also not the first set of discoveries.

The search from December 2010 through May 2011 found seven more bodies, but they were clearly far older than those found

on Gilgo Beach in December.

On March 29th, 2011, remains of Jessica Taylor were found roughly a mile from the Gilgo Four. She had been murdered in July of 2003, and they'd found some of her remains on July 26th, 2003, near Manorville, about 35 miles away. That is interesting, because that would mean that the dumping of the body near to Gilgo Beach had to be done at a different time, and thus they would have had to be transported. In 2003, they'd found her torso in Manorville, placed on a piece of plastic. In 2011, they found her skull, hands, and a forearm were found near Gilgo Beach. This would indicate that the killer wanted to hide her identity, and it had worked; until they started scouring because of finding the Gilgo Beach 4, they'd had no clue who they'd found in Manorville. The Gilgo Beach 4 were not dismembered, nor was there any attempt to hide their identities. This felt fundamentally different.

On April 4, a head, right foot, and a pair of hands were found about a mile and a half from Jessica Taylor's. Back in 2000, her torso had been found in a garbage bag, also out in Manorville. At first, they thought this was a new person, but they eventually identified her as Valerie Mack. You'll still see her called Jane Doe #6 some times.

The same day, and not more than a hundred yards from Valerie Mack the bones of a toddler were found. While Mack's body had been dismembered, it doesn't appear that the toddler's was. There was no determination of the time elapsed between each being placed on the beach. They found some gold jewelry by the toddler. They determined that the toddler was not Mack's child.

She was the daughter of another woman who had been dismembered, and who has not been identified to this day. They refer

to her as Jane Doe #3, or more often as 'Peaches' and I'll have more on her later.

Then, there was Asian Male, though that might not be the case. On April 4th, they found a setoff remains between Taylor and the main Gilgo Four, and they were remains of a male, but wearing woman's clothing, which could indicate that they were trans, but it could also indicate a drag performer, or both. One thing that's certainly everywhere is that the killer may have hired them as a sex worker, and then when they discovered they had a penis, they beat them to death. This was a unique death among the victims, though determining the cause of death for the dismembered victims is very difficult.

There is one that is closely related to these, though not quite. Peaches' torso was found in a Rubbermade tote. This was 1997. She had been dead for about three days, but it wasn't until 2011, when they were scouring every inch of Ocean Parkway for remains, that they found her arms and legs, but not her head. She was the infant's mother, but had not been dumped in the same location. We can assume that they were killed at the same time, but not necessarily. If she was a sex worker, and there's no evidence of that, she may have brought her daughter with her, or had her wait in the car. The killer could have taken the kid with them. The fact that the child was found in a different location, but very near to another victim, would make it seem like they may have been dumped at different times.

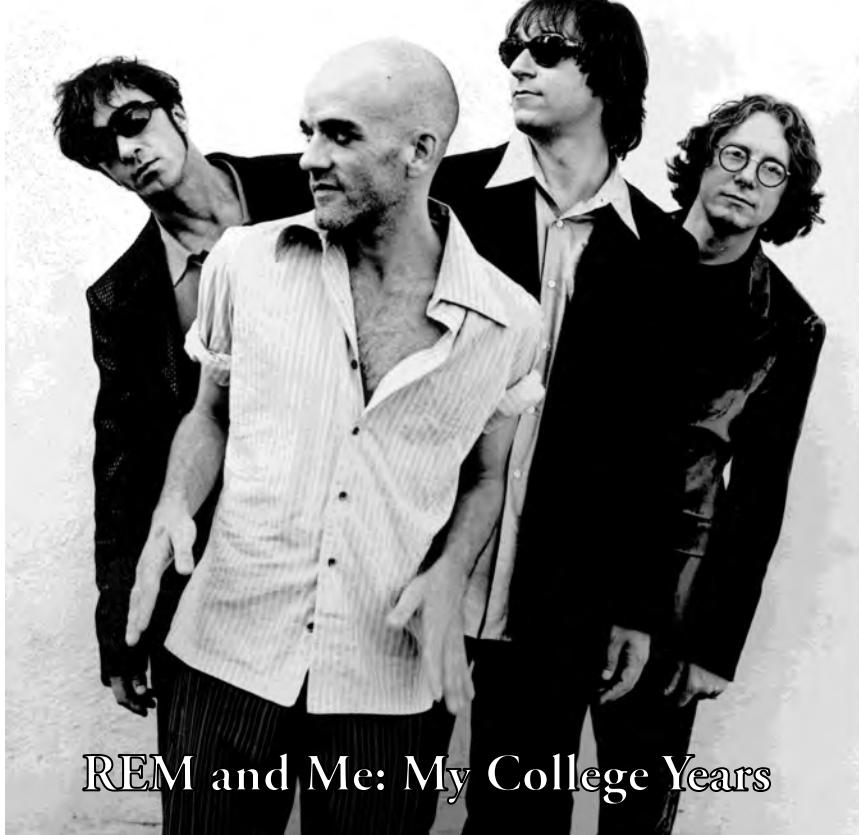
Those are the victims found near Gilgo Beach in addition to the original four. These victims fit in with each other for the most part. Two had been dismembered and were located in the same areas. One was related to another murder, where the victim had been dismembered. There was a male, but wearing woman's clothing. There were two that were known to be sex workers. Valerie Mack

was about 5 feet tall, and maybe 100 pounds. I believe that Jessica was 5'2. Asian Male was 5'6. While Peaches was a few miles west and south, they were found along the network of beaches, but her vital stats are unknown, though some have noted she was likely larger than the others.

But why would they have been separated from her daughter? Why would the killer have cut up Peaches, but not the kid? Why dump the kid so close to another body? Coincidence? Or, maybe, he'd taken the kid with them, then killed them later, dumped them elsewhere, and perhaps when they killed Taylor, they dumped her in the same area, perhaps because he had been experimenting on placement and found the location where he had dumped the child to be better. It could also be that they dumped the two bodies at the same time, going along the Ocean Parkway, dropping them separated by miles so that if one was found, the other would not necessarily be found. Perhaps he knew that the discovery of one of them would certainly lead to the discovery of the other, or at least the connection between the two. That took more than a decade.

So, is this one or two serial killers?

Time-wise, there's a much wider spread of the victims who were not among the Gilgo Beach four. The MO in most of them is the same, though 'Asian Male' is different in a lot of ways, especially if they were not a sex worker. While Forensic Genealogy has identified one of them, Peaches remains unidentified, as well as her child. Solving their identities might help, but none of the other woman killed knew each other and it appears they are all victims of opportunity rather than purpose.



REM and Me: My College Years

REM hit it big in 1991 with *Losing My Religion*.

Alternative Music broke huge following Nirvana and Pearl Jam and others breaking things wide open. This led to the *Out of Time* being one of the most lauded albums of 1991, and then in 1992 *Automatic for the People* came out and blew everything away.

I was listening to ska. And punk. And was dipping my toes into Jazz and classical. It was not unusual for me to go to Nuggets, or Mystery Train, or Newbury Comics, or any of a dozen other record stores and come out with five or six CDs or tapes. I spent a lot of time listening to music, and though Freshman year was rough for

me, I met the girl who would define much of my dating life forever—M.

M loved REM. She loved Morphine more, both the capital and lowercase versions, but she had everything REM ever put out, including bootlegs of concerts and unreleased tracks. She saw them at least a hundred times over the years, following them for a summer before I knew her. She had met the band more than once.

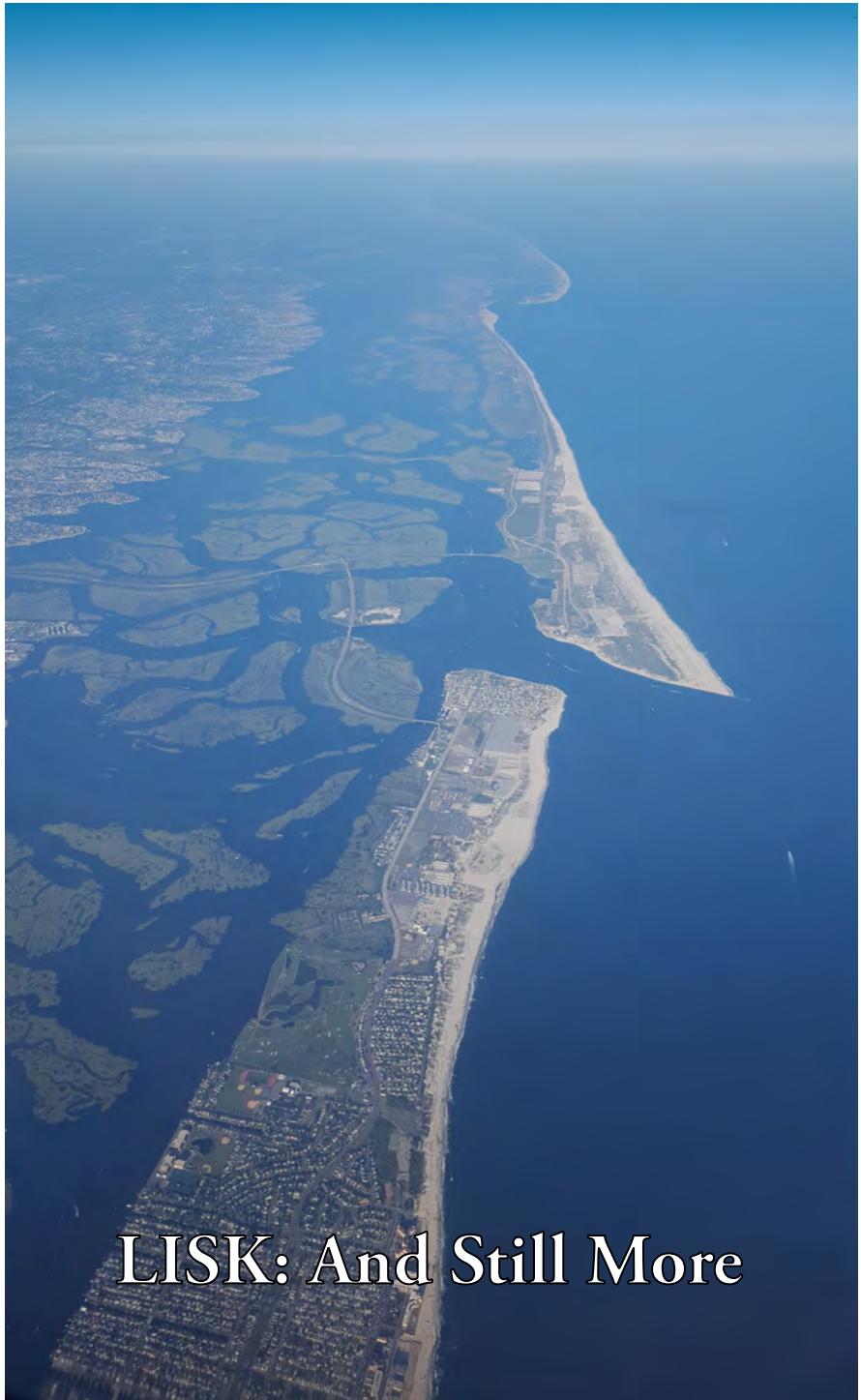
She once told me she would kill herself if they ever broke up. Luckily, she did not carry through with that threat in her later years.

She would play REM a lot when we were together. I remember cuddling up on her incredible couch for an incredibly cold winter's night, I think it was something like 12 degrees out, and her apartment at the time, maybe ten stories stories up, had a view of the Public Garden, covered in snow, the giant window frosting at the corners like some maudlin Christmas card. We sat there, snugglin' and snoggin' and I distinctly remember the song *Everybody Hurts* coming on.

And she started crying.

I mean bawling. Giant, heaping sobs. This happened from time to time, she had issues, but she seldom let anyone comfort her. She wanted to suffer, she'd say, but that night, she leaned into me, my arms around her, and cried and cried, and cried. The CD played all the way through, and she didn't stop. When it did, she said to throw on *Document*, and I got up and made her a drink, as I recall an Irish coffee as she always had a pot on the warmer, and settled back down on the couch.

To this day, I really can't listen to *Automatic for the People*.



LISK: And Still More

The searches continued.

A week after discovering the four bodies nearest the Gilgo Beach four, more remains were found, Peaches and Fire Island Doe. Peaches clearly shared an MO with the previous set of discoveries, but Fire Island Doe, still unidentified to this day, was slightly different. She had been dismembered, but they found her legs in 1996, and her skull on April 11, 2011. The torso was not found initially. She was found near Davis Park.

This could have meant that the legs had no identifying marks but the torso did. This was the earliest crime we know of, her legs had been found in 1996, and if that's the case, this could be a killer feeling out his MO. If the torso had a number of tattoos, that could have meant they needed to find a disposal method for it, possibly throwing it into the ocean, or simple burying it deeper.

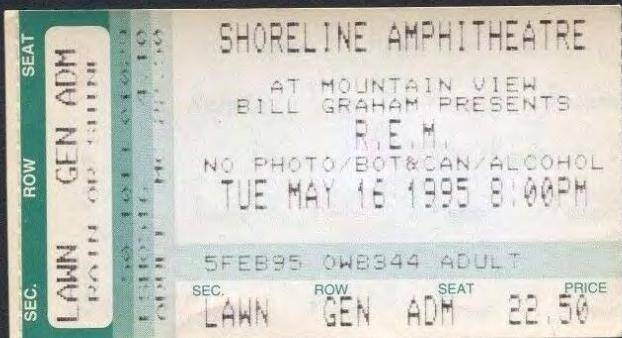
These seem to fit a single killer theory, but there are others that fit in some ways. Jacqueline Smith's torso was found in Rockaway Beach, Queens, in 2000, she had gone missing the previous year. Two years later, Andre Jamal, a drag queen who was 6'5. Jamal was the only victim we know of who was shot, in the temple. They found Jamal's torso, then his head, and then arms and legs between Nov. 2002 and January 2003. These were found on a beach in Queens.

Tanya Rush had taken up sex work at some point to fund a drugs habit. She was found dismembered in Bellmore, about 15 miles from Gilgo Beach. She was found in 2008 in a black suitcase.

Jamie Seymour disappeared in 2005. She was a sex worker, and she was small like the Gilgo Beach Four.

Cherries, the pseudonym used for an unidentified female with a tattoo of cherries on her right breast. Her torso was found March 3rd in Mamaroneck, and her arms and legs later in the month in Oyster Bay. They may have been driven into the shore by storms. Another set of remains were found in 2012 in Lattingtown near Oyster Bay.

But what of Shannan Gilbert? The call she made had started it all and she had yet to be found.



REM and Me: The Random Woman

As an album, *Monster* is really good. It was a turn, a bit more like the stuff we were hearing from Weezer and The Afghan Whigs, which I loved. I'd argue this was power pop in their mold and I loved that.

They went on tour, but I missed them again. They came around in 1999 and I finally saw them, on the grass, at Shoreline. I only saw a couple of shows a year at Shoreline; tickets cost so much more than for the shows I tended to frequent at The Edge and The Cactus Club.

So, I got there early, and a gaggle of young women, all wearing Santa Clara University shorts, brought a blanket and spread it out not five feet from where I was sitting, waiting with a copy of *Tales of the City* as I remember it.

The show started, and three songs in, the song *Suspicion* started. At the very start of the song, one of the women sitting near me walked over.

“Wanna dance?”

I said “Yes, yes I do.”

And we slow-danced.

We literally said nothing, just danced. We danced a couple of more times that night,

I never caught her name.

I shoulda got her phone number.



LISK: Shannan Gilber

July 23rd, Don Francisco's Kona blend

The searches of Gilgo Beach started after Shannan Gilbert's 9-1-1 call.

Then why wasn't she found until Dec 2011, a full year after they'd located the Gilgo Four and so many others?

Part of it was that Gilbert was quite near where she had made her call from. They looked there, in Oak Beach, and did not find her there, but went broader.

The 9-1-1 call is fascinating, and some of the assumptions the police have made in the years since are at least somewhat justified based on the call. The story goes that Gilbert had been called for a high-paying gig out on Oak Beach by Joseph Brewer. He lived alone, and while he claims it wasn't for sex, Shannan's driver, Michael Pak, says otherwise. He drove her, but waited in the car. She'd asked him to go and get some lube and a deck of playing cards. Since Pak didn't know the area, he didn't go.

At some point, Brewer either tried to get her to go, or she called 9-1-1 because she felt threatened. Both could be easily be-

lied. She said that ‘they were trying to kill me.’ and then it appears that after a long call, she left, running out. She pounded on a neighbor’s door, they called 9-1-1 and she hid beneath his boat in the driveway as an SUV drove by. She said people we’re trying to kill her. She then went to another neighbor’s house and pounded on the door. They called the cops too.

And then, Shannan Gilbert disappeared.

The cops listened to the recording and found that Gilbert had been non-responsive at times, that she might have been slurring her words, and at times largely oblivious to what the dispatcher was saying. Gilbert didn’t know where she was, not even mentioning the city, though since Pak drove, she may have had 0 clue.

Her body was found near Oak Beach, in a marsh not far from where she’d called. Both Pak and Brewer cooperated, and it seems like neither were the killer.

This does not mean they did not participate.

This is where the cops really show themselves—they ruled her death an accidental drowning.

Now, there’s several ways to go with that. Her remains, mostly skeletal I believe, were found on a bush. It’s highly possible that they were washed there. The larynx was missing, and the hyoid bone was not intact. That’s often seen in strangulation cases.

Now, many think that she had taken some drugs, she was a known user, and started freaking out, running out and eventually hiding in the marsh. That much makes sense. She could have drowned, but during the call, she goes in and out of clarity, it seems, and that alone should be cause for question. Perhaps she called almost immediately after taking something and ended up being hit by

it in waves. That happens. It could be that she tripped and fell and couldn't get up. It could be she was caught and strangled by the killer.

Though, I think if that was the case, it would be someone new to the investigation.

Just leaving the body where it fell is clearly a different MO. I do feel this is related to at least one of the serial killers working on Long Island. In a way, I compare this to the murder of Elizabeth Stride by Jack the Ripper. He did not have time to do the mutilations, and thus he only managed to kill her with the slash before being interrupted and forced to flee. If the killer of Gilbert had managed to catch up to her, and strangle her to death, he may have known that the police had been called and would be looking for her. He could not let her go, she must have seen him, and thus had to kill her. He finds her, strangles her, and instead of taking her in his car, he may well be stopped on his way out, he simply leaves her body in the marsh.

It's not a perfect scenario, but it's sure a possible one.

Shannan Gilbert's body wasn't found for 18 months, but it was found, and it's an another potential victim, at the same time as being a singleton no matter which set of murders you attribute it to. The Gilgo Beach murders were of petite, and Gilbert was 5'5. Similar in size to Warweman. She was found in Oak Beach, not far from where the others were, 7 miles or so, but she wasn't dismembered, or wrapped in burlap, or even hidden. This would make her different in the majority, but similar in the victim type.

I believe Gilbert was killed by one of the two serial killers who were responsible for the crimes—The Gilgo Beach Killer (almost certainly Rex Heuermann) and LISK, still unknown.



REM and Me—The 2000s

July 23rd, Don Francisco's Kona coffee blend.

I don't much listen to REM these days.

That's not entirely true, but truer than not. I have *Orange Crush*, *The One I love*, and *It's the End of the World as We Know It* on some playlists, but in the old days, I'd put on the albums and listen. Listen, and kinda hit that place that makes me think. I wrote a lot of early *Drink Tanks* the sound of *Green*. I wrote a lot of the first couple of years of *Journey Planet* to *Monster*. I used to write a lot while listening to music. Now, I listen to podcasts, or audiobooks.

Today, I listened to as much REM as I could, for the first time in ages.

I started with their first album and actually made it all the way through *Monster*. I heard the evolution, and for the first time in years, I found myself feeling the things I felt when I started listening to REM. There was a depth to the lyrics that I knew was there all along, but I hadn't grabbed on to them fully until I was able to appreciate the world beyond the music .



LISK—James Burke

July 24th, Kauai Coffee Garden Isle blend.

James Burke was the Police Chief of Suffolk County, where several of the victims were found. Now, he is a convicted felon.

He hampered nearly every step made in investigating the case. As early as 2012, Burke was being looked into for frequenting sex workers, assault, and other violations. These were being looked into at the same time as the Gilgo Beach investigation, and there was no example more telling than that of Shannan Gilbert. Though there could easily be seen as a potential murder, the Suffolk County police refused to investigate it as such.

Why?

Well, Burke's interactions with sex workers may well have led him to not wanting the feds poking around in that area. If it was the case, he may have known more than he let get out.

Though, I think it's more self-preservation. I don't think Burke's one of Long Island Serial Killers. I also don't think he much cared if LISK(s) got caught.

Cops and sex workers have a difficult relationship. A lot of sex work is illegal, and that's obviously gonna stick in an officer's

craw. BUT, there are a lot of cops who frequent sex workers, and even some who see it that since they're breaking the law, they're the ones who should take the full brunt of their darker urges.

Burke was one of those kinds of cops, apparently.

The idea that the cops were looking the other way while they knew a serial killer was on the loose isn't entirely far-fetched, but I also don't quite think this is that. I think it's the rare combination of the victims seeming to be less dead (sex workers) and the higher-ups having skeletons in their closets that they did not want getting an airing.

Once the FBI took over, Burke was arrested for his crimes, and a task force was put together, there was movement. It was 2022 when a name was proposed, and a serious series of inquiries were made. The task force brought together all the cops—county, state, and federal investigators. This was made possible by a new police commissioner, only a year on the jib, and likely the increased attention the murders had received over the previous year, especially with podcasts like *Unraveled*. It also probably helped that in 2020, they'd been able to identify Valerie Mack through genetic genealogy, showing it's clear usefulness in the case. They've used it a few times, and notably they've identified a line towards Peaches, though no conclusion to that line yet.

There was clearly increased movement on the case. One of the victims had been bound by belts, and one of the belts had a brand on it—either HM or WH. Now, most say that the 'H' would have been for 'Heuermann' and the W for whatever relative owned the belt. I tend to think it's for 'HeuerMann' but it may just be my love of internal capitals.

The task force eventually focused on Rex Heuermann.



LISK—Rex Heuerman

July 25th, Kauai Coffee Garden Isle blend

They've got this fucker.

Honestly, if all they had was the publicly acknowledged evidence they're going to put this guy away for a long, long time.

There are several things that have been released, and some stuff that's been leaked. The first official release, that belt, could sure look like it's his. That's actually not nearly as damning as the DNA.

They managed to get some DNA off the burlap in the form of a hair. Advances over the last couple of years have allowed for much more definitive identification using hair as a DNA source even if it doesn't have the root. There may have been other DNA present, but we known one of his hairs was found and the DNA matched to his via a pizza crust he discarded in Manhattan while

they were following him.

Note: New York Pizza, as a whole, is worth throwing away.

Anyhoo, these were not the only hairs, as three of his wife's hairs were found on or near the victims. Since she was out of town (I believe in Iceland) during the times they were likely killed, it's likely that they were transferred to the tape used to bind the bodies from Heuermann's clothes, or perhaps she'd used the tape previously, or possibly he simply did the wrapping in a location where there's a lot of hair.

That alone is likely to lead to a conviction, but there's more.

Heuermann also drove a Chevy Avalanche. If you've ever seen one, you know that it's one of the ugliest cars ever seen. It's an extended cab pick-up, kinda like an old El Camino SUVed. A witness in the Amber Costello case, I believe the last person to see her alive, reported a first generation Chevy Avalanche. Any attempt of a defense attorney to claim it was any other kind of SUV would be easily wiped away as it's the ugliest car ever sold.

He often used burner phones, or phones he took from the women he killed. He even checked Brainard-Barnes' voicemails, though made no taunting, and ultimately damning, phone calls like he had to Melissa Barthelemy's family. Those calls came from places he frequented, mostly Manhattan and some from Freeport on Long Island. Waterman's phone traveled to Massapequa Park, near Heuermann's house. She had been contacted by a burner phone, though I haven't seen confirmation connecting that specific burner to Heuermann, though I know that can be difficult.

Amber Costello was killed after a scam. She had a guy pre-

tend to be her boyfriend and make off with the money Heuermann was going to pay her. All the contact between the two had been via burner phone, and he texted her “That was not nice so do credit for next time.”

He called again and wanted to buy her services, but this time at his own place. That was the last she was heard from.

Heuermann traveled at times with both burner phones that had been used to contact the victims and his own cellphone, often to areas where the victims’ cellphones had also pinged. He also bought minutes for a burner phone using cash in May, 2023. That even more clearly aligned him to the practice of burner phone usage.

His Google search history is disgusting, but in addition to the pedophilia and violent fantasy porn searches, he also obsessively searched for info on LISK. He had dozens of email addresses under several aliases, and Tinder accounts under a couple of them as well. He also still searched for sex workers and made calls to them using burner phones.

There are few gaps, and a good defense lawyer, which Heuermann can probably afford, will pick and pull at every thread trying to unravel the case. He might succeed on a couple of the counts, but the hair found with Costello’s body is pretty much iron-clad, and the cellphone pings put him everywhere.

I believe he’s the Gilgo Beach Killer.

But maybe not LISK.



REM & Me—My favorite REM Lyrics

5) *The One I Love*

A simple song with nearly identically-repeated stanzas, but it's such a powerfully brutal song. It could easily be applied in various situations and relationships, and at times it feels a little close to these old bones...

4) *Bang & Blame*

There's a sequence of lyrics in here that I count among the best I've ever heard.

If you could see yourself now, baby
The tables have turned, the whole world hinges on your
swings
Your secret life of indiscreet discretions
I'd turn the screw and leave the screen

3) *Shiny Happy People*

I love the B-52s so Kate Pierson teaming up with REM is a good thing! This is one of their few truly joyful songs, without a hint of cynicism. Michael Stipe apparently used a translated Chinese phrase he saw posted by the government after Tianamen Square as the basis for a purely bubble gum pop song.

And apparently, Stipe does not want it to stand for the groups oeuvre.

2) *Nightswimming*

This is just about as gentle as REM gets, and it's got a set that really hits me hard.

Nightswimming deserves a quiet night
The photograph on the dashboard, taken years ago
Turned around backwards so the windshield shows
Every streetlight reveals the picture in reverse
Still, it's so much clearer
I forgot my shirt at the water's edge
The moon is low tonight

1) *Orange Crush*

These are impressive lyrics, and even when I was a kid and had no idea what they were about, I memorized them. I Knew this was a song in which war was a theme, though I doubt I could have articulated that fully. The “serve your conscious overseas” probably tipped me off, but it's all there.



July 25th—Don Francisco's Kona Blend

There had to be another.

If you look at how the Gilgo Beach killings were done, and how the separate and dismember killings were done, there are few similarities that aren't also shared with the other Long Island serial killer—Joel Rifkin. They murdered sex workers and they dumped their bodies near water, and several of their victims are unnamed.

These are different killers, almost certainly.

Now, is it unknown for a killer to change MOs? No, but it's rare that a killer is as fuzzy-edged as whoever killed the dismembered bodies found due to searching Gilgo and adjoining beaches. The timeframe potentially maps, Heuermann lived on Long Island the whole time, but there's a wider impact zone for the dismemberments.

In fact, there's a lot of things that make me think that there are two, and only two, killers at work for the discovered bodies.

Let's leave Shannan Gilbert aside. My guess is that if she's a victim of either, and I think she died by either the hands or threats of one, I'd say it was Heuerman. It's possible either way, though it's far different from the others. The dismembered bodies killings probably started with Fire Island Doe in 1996. That's a tough way to start, though it wouldn't be the first time a killer started with a dismemberment as their disposal MO. The Cleveland Torso Murders are likely in that category, as is the Camden Ripper in the UK. There wasn't a lot of skill taken to get the body apart. A lot of strength, true, but not skill. That's one reason why so many folks seem to point to the 'ogre' that is Heuermann.

But I don't think so.

Heuerman appears to have used his home as his killing floor, and then transported them to Gilgo Beach, and kinda bunched them up. It's as if they were his trophies, and he could even have visited them if he wanted to. The other bodies don't have the same sort of trophy-like care taken. He didn't even dump the parts of the victims in the same location. I really believe that the Gilgo Beach site is specific to those that Heuermann killed, and that since the earliest murders were not clustered, they were separate, and likely they were victims of a killer who did not need or want to see the bodies, and in fact was far more concerned about being caught. Gilgo Beach was not the dumping ground for a killer who was deeply concerned about being found out. Clustered like that, authorities would find one and then obviously find all.

Plus, there's a definite victim type for the Gilgo Beach 4, and even one if you add Gilbert.

And, I actually think that Peaches and her daughter, along with Fire Island Doe, and their actual identities may hold the key to the entire crime.

It's been theorized that Peaches was a sex worker who brought their kid with them, either into the room when Peaches plied her trade, or left in the car. There's no evidence that they were killed at the same time. There's also a large potential age window for the child. That could mean that Peaches died first, and the killer held on to the child, or that the child was killed first, but either way, they could have been separated not as a way to issue some final humiliation to Peaches, which is a popular theory, but as a way to prevent identification. Separating them makes it less likely to tie them together, and any killer who has any sort of knowledge would know that DNA was making it easier and easier to identify people as related. Separating them gives distance.

And that would be important if they were deeply tied to the killer.

The popular theory here is that Peaches was the killers baby-mama, or slightly less popular, their pimp. My theory is the latter. In the prior, he may not have known that there was a kid and when he found out he killed them both. Possible. I tend to think another possibility might be punishment for Peaches for some transgression in the killer's eyes, and eventually Peaches met the same fate. Controlling a woman by threatening or even beating or murdering their kid would be something a pimp might do. Then, when time to hide the identifying bits of Valerie Mack, he either just randomly figured this spot near the kid was good since no one had found the other remains. Or, it could just have been an easy area to dump.

This leads me to think if the killer was Peaches' pimp, were

they also pimp of any of the others?

Or could they have been a rival pimp, killing those who either chose not to be a part of their stable, or encroaching on claimed territory?

These are all possibilities, but really, it's pretty clear that these killings were not the same as the Gilgo Beach Four.

These were not strangulations. That's another big one. These appear to use weapons of different kinds, perhaps opportunistic in nature. That's not to say they found a weapon in a location and used it, but that it was only whatever they had at hand. With the Gilgo Beach 4, it appears that the strangulation may have been a part of the ritual; he wanted to be close to the victims, to feel them die, and then have them viewable after, reminding him of his handiwork.

The variety of victim types for the dismemberment killings, plus the variations, makes me think this is not a killer who was killing for the personal satisfaction; this was a killer who was working. The victim clustering on the Gilgo Beach Four was so much closer than those of the dismembered victims. That's incredibly different from a killer who killed between 1996 and 2007. Now, we have 2007, when Cherries was killed and dismembered, and Maureen Brainard-Barnes was killed by the Gilgo Beach Killer. In a short few months, we can see the difference between the two styles.

Fire Island Doe could be a key. An early victim often holds the secret to why the killings began. If it was found out that she had run afoul of her pimp, that's a solid starting point. It would seem like identifying Peaches or Cherries might be possible, and the position of the tattoo on each might be a commonality and clue.

There are two of them, and apparently, only one is caught.



Enough of that!

Anyhoo, I went to Stanford to do some more Saroyan research, and I stopped by the Anderson Collection and Cantor Arts Center. I'll write more about that next time, because how could I not?

I did get to see some really fun video art, but I mostly found myself enjoying a walk where I got to see some familiar friends.

Because I've been to both museums a LOT!

I've been thinking about 2020 a lot lately. It was a great year for me as well as being incredibly stressful, terrifying, sad, and really

damn hard. I worked from home, which was good, as it let me have a ton of time for fanac and working at off hours and still getting to cook, have some time with the kids, watch a lot of TV and movies, and most importantly, enjoy the comforts of no commute. I also got to connect with a lot of folks I never get to see via Zoom and I pod-casted a lot more, and I even ‘met’ new friends. It was a crazy beautiful terrible time.

Though, honestly, it was one of the best years of my adult life. I have so much to show for it! *Short Story Short Podcast* is clearly the longest-lasting piece of that.

2021 was OK, though difficult. We were still dealing with getting back into the house after the fire for the first few months. Things were rough with the kids. Money was tight, but not too tight. I lost my job, but I also got this new job which is fantastic! SO it was a wash. Year ended with me getting offered a bookdeal I didn’t even have to work towards getting.

2022? I wrote the book! I did the zines! I podcasted some, I couldn’t really paint much. I wrote a lot of zines, I did a lot of layout, I traveled to LA a couple of times, Palm Springs, and Chicago for WorldCon. It was a fun year..

...except for the health issues, notably my three days in hospital for critically low sodium. Diabetes was new (well, not new, and that was really the problem...) but it didn’t take too much to get that fairly well under control.

2023? Pretty great. Maui and WrestleMania weekend in LA. Going to see the New Japan wrestling show in San Jose was up there, as was getting to go to SFMoMA a couple of times, watch a lot of Cinequest movies, and generally wait for July 29th when my book hits the street in the UK. So, hits the streetes???

All in all, I'm really lucky. I know it; I've always known it. I have led a life I'm proud of, for a fair portion, and can't say that I would change much. I far more regret the things that I've done than the things that I've passed up. FAR MORE.

Next time, it'll probably be a more normal issue, but with me, who knows? There were UFO hearings in Congress, and hopefully, we'll have another Trump indictment to talk about.

And, of course, my book will be out in the UK...



